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items is explainable, if not defensible, but why the Declaration of the Stamp Act Congress, the Declaratory Act of Parliament of 1766, the Mecklenburg Declarations, both spurious and authentic, and the Virginia Bill of Rights of 1776 should be selected, to the exclusion of documents really vital to the argument, it is hard to understand.

An excellent index completes the volume.

MAX FARRAND.

The Letters of Richard Henry Lee. Collected and edited by JAMES CURTIS BALLAGH, Ph.D., LL.D., Professor of American History in the Johns Hopkins University. Volume I, 1762-1778. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1911. Pp. xxvii, 467.)

THIS excellent edition of the letters of Richard Henry Lee is disappointing in no particular. The interest, the value, the freshness, and the significance are all that such a publication would lead one to expect. Lee was always to the forefront in the revolutionary advance. It was he who drafted the "Articles of Association by the Citizens of Westmoreland", binding themselves "at every hazard, and paying no regard to danger or death" to prevent the execution of the Stamp Act. In July of 1768, he was urging the creation of committees of correspondence, and among the first he congratulated Dickinson and Samuel Adams. April 1, 1776, he was urging independence, and within three weeks pleaded for foreign embassies. He was one of the first on hand with ideas for new state governments and in urging a confederation. In fact he was always ready with vague, general plans for correcting the times that were "out of joint", but rarely with specific devices. True patriot he was, ready to work himself blind and sick for the cause; he was not cool and calm and logical enough to be a great statesman. He became excited and worked madly on Congressional committees until he "panted for retirement from the most distressing pressure of business I ever had conception of". As a member of the war committee Lee writes letters that give much light on the military plans of Congress, Washington's relations with that body, and its difficulties in getting military supplies. The part which necessary inoculation against small-pox played in delaying the organization of armies in America is graphically shown in Lee's letters. Radical as he was he saw clearly the incongruity of democracy and military efficiency. He scolded constantly about the folly of the militia system, and urged the formation of regular armies. His plea for a naval force is insistent, and his letters furnish much detail about the British blockade of the coast, especially of Maryland and Virginia. America was like an island, he declared, and could not hope for decisive victory while Britannia "ruled the waves". As early as July 22, 1777, he foresaw Burgoyne's defeat or capture, because at his distance from the sea no naval rescue was possible. "Curse their canvas wings", he cried. After the French alliance and the coming of the French fleet, he was sure of ultimate success.

Lee's judgments like those of most men were a mixture of good and bad. He sent out to friends a good deal of misinformation, especially rumors of British misfortunes, which he accepted with optimistic eagerness. The *ignis fatuus* of a Spanish alliance he pursued till the dawn of peace. He had a most provincial confidence in foreign adventurers, urging Virginia ceaselessly to employ one to train the state's artillery. The flight of Congress to Baltimore he resisted to the last, necessary though it was. Finally, he approved of breaking the Saratoga convention. On the other hand he showed the greatest good sense in urging the necessity of taxation to sink the vast paper money issues. Again, he saw as clearly as Franklin how little significance there was in Howe's capture of Philadelphia. As to men his judgment was often bad. One can forgive him his amiable overestimation of his truculent, trouble-brewing brother, Arthur Lee, and even his implacable enmity to Silas Deane, for fraternal communications corrupted him there; but his enthusiasm over Gates, and the fact that he apparently brought that wolf, Charles Lee, into the fold—introducing him as the "able friend of liberty and mankind", that "warm, spirited foe to American oppression"—is less creditable to his judgment. In Lee's personal affairs there is much of interest. There is evidence that he and other Virginians were hard pressed financially in the period before the war, enough, indeed, to account for their discontent. In fact these letters reveal that the Virginian, with all of his scorn of the "Yankee pedlar", was quite as much engrossed with selling his tobacco, as was the trader with the sale of his Yankee notions. Lee's early letters are filled with data about the methods of trade with England, how vessels were loaded, the troubles with captains, the buying of clothes, medicines, and even eyeglasses, from over the sea.

Lee spoke and wrote habitually in rather exaggerated language. The Stamp Act's "intrinsic vileness", the "parricidal heart" of the stamp collector, "the diabolical wickedness of that execrable court", and the "infamous perseverance of the devils of despotism" are the only rhetorical outlets for his feelings. Against the Tories he is very bitter, and also against the backward states Maryland and Pennsylvania, while the idea of reconciliation is a red flag to this revolutionary Taurus. He is as sentimental, or rather sententious, as Joseph Surface, going repeatedly into long moral disquisitions. Some phrases, like "sunshine of liberty" and "dark arts of tyranny", become wearisome. With Latin phrases and the classic myths he shows acquaintance, also with French and French authors—especially Montesquieu. Shakespeare, Pope, Junius, and Butler's *Hudibras* are the English literary fields where he had most gleaned.

Dr. Ballagh's editing leaves nothing to be desired. It is a model of what such work should be. The second volume will of course contain an index, and with that the publication is beyond criticism.

C. H. VAN TYNE.